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TOAST BY THE HONORABLE BRENT SCOWCROFT
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

BEIJING, DECEMBER 9, 1989

RELEASED

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MR FOREIGN MINISTER, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

MY COLLEAGUES AND I HAVE COME HERE TODAY AS FRIENDS, TO RESUME OUR IMPORTANT DIALOGUE ON INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS OF VITAL INTEREST TO BOTH OUR NATIONS. THIS IS A DIALOGUE WHICH WE BELIEVE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE HISTORIC PEACE, STABILITY, AND PROSPERITY OF ASIA AND THE WORLD.

LAST WEEKEND, IN ANOTHER CORNER OF THE WORLD, PRESIDENTS BUSH AND GORBACHEV HELD TALKS ON THE GREAT ISSUES OF OUR DAY. AFTERWARDS, PRESIDENT BUSH INSTRUCTED ME TO COME TO CHINA AND INFORM OUR CHINESE HOSTS ABOUT THE TALKS IN MALTA. THERE IS NOTHING BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION THAT NEEDS TO BE HIDDEN FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA. THE PEACE AND STABILITY OF THE WORLD ARE ENHANCED BY THIS DIALOGUE.

WE ALSO COME TODAY TO BRING NEW IMPETUS AND VIGOR INTO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP AND SEEK NEW AREAS OF AGREEMENT ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND STRATEGIC. AND WE COME TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCE OF IRRITANTS IN THE RELATIONSHIP.

WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE NOT EXHAUST OURSELVES IN PLACING BLAME FOR PROBLEMS THAT EXIST. RATHER, BY WORKING TOGETHER -- WITHIN THE VALUES OF OUR DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS -- WE SHOULD SEEK TO SOLVE COMMON PROBLEMS AND REMOVE IRRITANTS.

IT IS THE PRESIDENT'S STRONG DESIRE TO SEE THESE TALKS MAKE PROGRESS AND LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE SOLUTIONS WE SEEK.

SPEAKING AS A FRIEND, I WOULD NOT BE HONEST IF I DID NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WE HAVE PROFOUND AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT -- ON THE EVENTS AT TIANANMEN, ON THE SWEEPING CHANGES IN EASTERN EUROPE. WE SEE YOUR COMPLAINTS ABOUT US IN THE PAGES OF PEOPLE'S DAILY.

BUT I RECALL THAT WHEN WE HAVE FOUND WAYS TO WORK TOGETHER, THE WORLD HAS BEEN CHANGED FOR THE BETTER, AND WHEN WE HAVE BEEN AT ODDS, NEEDLESS TENSION AND SUFFERING WERE THE RESULT. IN BOTH OUR SOCIETIES THERE ARE VOICES OF THOSE WHO SEEK TO REDIRECT OR FRUSTRATE OUR COOPERATION. WE BOTH MUST TAKE BOLD MEASURES TO OVERCOME THESE NEGATIVE FORCES.

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IN THESE MEETINGS WE SEEK TO OUTLINE BROAD AREAS WHERE AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE, AND TO ISOLATE FOR ANOTHER TIME THOSE AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT. THE SOONER WE SET ABOUT THIS TASK, THE BETTER. THE PATH AHEAD WILL NOT BE SMOOTH AND IT WILL NOT BE SHORT.

BUT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED MUCH WHEN WE HAVE WORKED TOGETHER IN THE PAST. I CAN CITE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL EXCHANGES, THE DEPARTURE OF SOVIET COMBAT FORCES FROM AFGHANISTAN, LIMITS ON MISSILE PROLIFERATION, PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA, THE WITHDRAWAL OF VIETNAM'S COMBAT FORCES FROM CAMBODIA, MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS, SCHOLAR EXCHANGES, AND MORE. WE -- BOTH SIDES -- MUST PERSEVERE. MORE THAN EVER.

WE ARE NOT CHINA'S PRIME ENEMY OR THREAT, AS SOME WOULD CLAIM. BUT, LIKE YOU, WE ARE TRUE TO OUR OWN VALUES, OUR HERITAGE AND TRADITIONS. WE CAN BE NO OTHER WAY. WE EXTEND OUR HAND IN FRIENDSHIP, AND HOPE YOU WILL DO THE SAME.

NOW MAY I PROPOSE A TOAST TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA -- TO THE HEALTH OF PRESIDENT YANG -- TO THE GREAT CHINESE PEOPLE -- AND TO U.S.-CHINESE FRIENDSHIP.

PARTIAL TRANSCRIPTION FOLLOWS

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